

# EXHIBIT 11

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## Mike Vrabel: Nix NFL brass from talks

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ESPN.com news services

MARCO ISLAND, Fla. -- Chiefs veteran linebacker Mike Vrabel has an idea for progressing talks between the NFL Players Association and the owners who have locked them out: cut out the middle men.

Vrabel, speaking to ESPN's George Smith in a roundtable interview during a break at the former union's annual meeting Friday, suggested meetings that didn't include commissioner Roger Goodell and the NFL's lead labor attorneys would be to everyone's advantage.

"We are willing to negotiate. But we don't want to negotiate with Bob Batterman, Jeff Pash or Roger Goodell," Vrabel said, referring to the NFL's outside labor counsel in Batterman and its executive vice president and lead counsel in Pash. "Our executive committee needs to negotiate with Jerry Jones, Bob Kraft, Jerry Richardson -- their executive committee. People that are willing and can agree to a deal. Jeff Pash can't agree to a deal."

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The NFL's negotiating team -- accompanied by the three owners Mike mentioned, Jerry Jones, Jerry Richardson and Robert Kraft -- is prepared to meet immediately. Just tell us when and where.

” -- *NFL spokesman Greg Aiello*

NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said the league accepts Vrabel's invitation to negotiate but didn't rule out the top executives' participation.

"The NFL's negotiating team -- accompanied by the three owners Mike mentioned, Jerry Jones, Jerry Richardson and Robert Kraft -- is prepared to meet immediately. Just tell us when and where," Aiello said of the Cowboys' owner, the Panthers' owner and the Patriots' owner.


A week after the union decertified and a lockout began shortly thereafter, Vrabel was among several players who continued to ratchet up the rhetoric publicly, targeting the owners group's motives and means in the NFL's labor stalemate.

Pete Kendall, the NFLPA's permanent player representative, told reporters labor negotiations broke down last week because the owners' last proposal would have made salaries a fixed cost and eliminated the players' chance to share in higher-than-projected revenue growth.

"That's a fundamental change as to the way the business has been done with the players -- player percentage always has been tied to revenues," said Kendall, a former 13-year offensive lineman who retired after the 2008 season.

Colts center and player representative Jeff Saturday, speaking to ESPN's Smith along with Vrabel,

Connolly Declaration Exhibit I-1

Saints quarterback , Broncos safety and player rep Brian Dawkins, and Ravens player representative Domonique Foxworth, bashed a letter Goodell sent to all NFL players Thursday in which he detailed the owners' version of events that led to last Friday's lockout.

"It's his attempt to, you know, to divide us as a group of men," Saturday said. "You know, anytime you send something out like that after we've been in negotiations for two-years plus, you know, 15-day extension -- all the things we've been through -- you know it's just one of those tactics different people use during the negotiations."

Mediation cut off last Friday, and the union dissolved itself, allowing players to file suit in federal court. Hours later, when the old collective bargaining agreement expired, owners locked out the players.

"The reality is we've been communicating to our men throughout this whole process about what the offers really are, what the numbers really are, things that we have tried to agree upon that have not been agreed upon and as a group of men we knew it wasn't a deal that our membership would accept," Saturday said.

Kendall described the league's 11th-hour offer as "kind of the old switcheroo," saying that throughout negotiations the players' chance to share in increased revenues had been a key component of how to divide the NFL's yearly take of more than \$9 billion.

#### **Goodell letter**



NFL commissioner Roger Goodell sent a letter to 1,900 NFL players on Thursday. Read it [here](#). Letter

Kendall said the discussions until talks stopped last Friday -- the 16th day of federal mediation -- always revolved around the premise that if the rise in league revenues exceeded a certain percentage each year, players would get a cut.

"The most important thing is getting back to playing football again," Brees said. "And that's why we're enjoining a lockout. Like all these guys have said, we, our intention was never to get locked out, we wanted to get a fair deal done. We always had guys there to do that."

Brees addressed the perceived Catch-22 surrounding rookie prospects' decision over whether to attend next month's draft, set for April 28-30.

"Each rookie has -- if they've been invited to New York -- they absolutely have the option of going to New York," Brees said in the interview with ESPN. "I think to our point it was -- how do you feel about walking across the stage and shaking the hand of the commissioner who just locked you out? And as great an experience as it is to get drafted, which it absolutely is, I think the even greater experience is to play your first game, and to have to opportunity to win a championship and right now that's being threatened with this lockout."

While the addition of an immediate 18-game schedule was tabled in the negotiations early last week, the possibility for instituting it in future seasons -- with the players' approval -- was retained.

"Eighteen games does nothing for our health and safety," said Foxworth, the former defensive back and Ravens player rep who retired in 2009. "We're not looking to make any financial gains, we're looking to protect former players and make protections and safety improvements for current players."

But the players told ESPN's Smith wasn't a deal-breaker.

"No. We'll negotiate on the economics of football," Vrabel said. "We're not negotiating on health and safety. And as far as we're concerned 18 games lies right in the way of our players health and safety."

An April 6 hearing date is set for U.S. District Court in Minnesota for a ruling on the players' request for an injunction that would end the lockout.

But a settlement between the owners and players before the hearing is unlikely, an NFLPA source told ESPN NFL Insider Adam Schefter earlier this week. The source said a ruling on the players' injunction request was expected within a week of the hearing.

"We're confident that this injunction is gonna be granted," Foxworth said. "And I think the message to the fans is -- all the fans should just unite and root for this at this point. You don't have a team to root for at this point, you wanna root for your team when the season comes, you need to be outside the courthouse with your face painted cheering for the judge to grant this injunction. Because I think simply put if we are granted this injunction there will be football. "

*Information from The Associated Press was used in this report.*

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